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ABSTRACT

This report, prepared by the Teacher Education and Professional Standards Commission of the Ohio Education Association, discusses aspects of prekindergarten programs. Included are brief guidelines on the following subjects: prekindergarten teacher certification and responsibilities; the role of the school principal and of the prekindergarten paraprofessional; developing rapport with children and promoting positive adult-child interaction; orientation to school; arrival, planned activity time, prereading programs, rest room procedures, snack time, play, storytime, and science/nature instruction; field trips; interest centers; cognitive and socioemotional goals and objectives; physical development; and the physical setting. The Commission recommends that prekindergarten programs be incorporated into the existing public school structure. (SB)

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**Suggested Guidelines
for
Prekindergarten Curriculum**

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The Teacher Education and Professional Standards Commission wishes to express its deep appreciation to Annetta Dellinger for her invaluable assistance in the development of this publication.

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PREFACE

I. AUTHORIZATION

The Executive Committee of the Ohio Education Association in August, 1975, directed the Teacher Education and Professional Standards Commission to make a study of early childhood education. The TEPS Commission reported to the Executive Committee in March, 1976, the following findings, conclusions and recommendation:

FINDINGS

1. *There is considerable literature supporting the desirability of public school programs for four year olds.*
2. *The number of preschool programs is increasing rapidly. Churches appear to be the primary sponsor of these programs.*
3. *Many of the preschool institutions are providing day care for youngsters one to five years old, but some are organized for "instruction" also. At the present time in Ohio, there is regulation of the day care operation under the State Welfare Department, but no standards for the "instruction" aspect.*
4. *At the national level, there are two pieces of legislation proposed to deal with early age education. These are Senate Bill 626 and House Bill 2966.*

CONCLUSIONS

1. *Our limited study demonstrates that Early Childhood Education is beneficial to children's development.*
2. *There is a growing interest of parents and educators in this subject.*
3. *There should be guidelines to insure a sound educational program.*
4. *Schools that provide exclusively day care services should remain under the authority of the Ohio Welfare Department.*

RECOMMENDATION

The Teacher Education and Professional Standards Commission recommends that the Executive Committee authorize a thorough study of early childhood education leading to the creation of specific guidelines for same.

These guidelines are in response to the Executive Committee's acceptance of the recommendation that such be created.

Preface

II. CERTIFICATION AND LICENSURE

The Teacher Education and Professional Standards Commission believes that the prekindergarten component of the educational process should be incorporated into the existing public school structure. The Commission recommends that the State Department of Education develop minimum standards for prekindergarten similar to those currently in existence for Ohio's public schools K-12. TEPS further recommends that teacher certification standards should be developed for prekindergarten teachers in a manner similar to certificates currently required for teachers of grades K-12. Until such time that specific certification standards are designed expressly for prekindergarten, the TEPS Commission believes prekindergarten should be taught by persons who possess the kindergarten certificate as currently issued by the State of Ohio.

INTRODUCTION

The prekindergarten program should seek to provide educational experiences for the child.

The educationally appropriate objectives for any prekindergarten program are to expose children to the widest possible variety of experiences in order to arouse their curiosity, challenge their physical and intellectual abilities, and encourage self expression. In effect, the first "school" experience should be one which develops a sense of joy, wonder and curiosity in the world around us. Children should feel confident that they can and should ask questions, try new ideas, and, most importantly, feel good about themselves.

Much research has proved the vital necessity of the early educable years. Thus, the early education programs with the special teacher and well balanced curriculum is essential.

A child's inner world is a prime determiner of behavior and forms the core of his/her personality. It mirrors their identity and has a profound affect on how they function.

The roots of self-concept reach deeply and are formed in early childhood. The child's idea of self is essentially a reflection of the responses others make to him/her. To be valued by an important person in their life is not just a nice experience, it is a vital one.

In the final analysis, it is the teacher who determines the degree of success or failure of the program. The teacher sets the standards, selects the activities and materials. The teacher establishes the atmosphere and environment by his/her personality and attitude which in turn affects attitudes and behaviors in children. The program will grow and develop as the teacher contributes his/her own special skill and interpretation to it. Teachers must be able to continuously evaluate themselves and the children if their methods are to improve.

The sensitive teacher will also experience the frustration of trying to determine if she/he has done all they can, or if others should be sought to provide advice and resources.

Community resources are vital and provide a rich source of experience and aid to the teacher. Of vital and significant concern to the school program is the role of the parent. This aspect of the preschool program should become an integral part of it.

Teacher education provides a means for teacher improvement and growth. Parent involvement must also be developed to provide parent improvement and growth as a means of their self-assurance, realizing that parenthood is a continual process of problem solving. Parent education should strive to develop better understanding of oneself on the part of the parent as well as a better understanding of child development.

Introduction

The intent of this publication is to describe a program for the total needs of the child:

COGNITIVE

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL

PHYSICAL

To help the child move successfully toward their full potential, the pre-kindergarten program needs the maximum practical involvement of teachers, parents and community.

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. The prekindergarten child must be four years old by September 30.
2. Transportation should be provided to the prekindergarten by the parents.
3. No teacher is to excuse a child to return home with anyone other than the parents unless the teacher has a written note stating who will pick up the child.
4. Those picking up the child from school must come to where the teacher is dismissing the children to get them personally. Children should not be allowed to leave the building alone.
5. The class size should be no more than fifteen (15), but preferably the size would be twelve (12).
6. The suggested length of the school year for the prekindergarten child would be eight months. Due to the importance of family life and influences upon the four year old child, it seems appropriate that they spend time with their families while older sisters or brothers are in school. Prekindergarten teachers could utilize the time before formal class meetings begin in late September conducting home visitations with parents.
7. Prekindergarten should be offered five, one-half days per week.
8. The prekindergarten class time should be two and one-half (2½) hours per day.
9. The school should provide a safe playground for the children outdoors and an area for indoor play.
10. Often the young child is asked, "What did you do in school today?". It is important for parents to realize that prekindergarten does make a valuable contribution to their child's educational program. If parents feel that children make positive educational gains in prekindergarten, they may make a greater effort to see that the child attends regularly and they may consult with the teacher in order to discover ways in which they could help the child at home.

General Information

It is also important that the child knows what has been learned while at school. This contributes to a positive image of oneself and gives one a feeling of success in school activities.

11. One of the primary purposes for parent meetings is to help the parent understand the developmental needs of the young child and the importance of the parents' role in the child's development. Teachers should always be willing to listen to and talk with parents.
12. Newsletters afford opportunities to relay information about a coming event, pass along some of the children's sayings or a recipe the children used.
13. Personal notes may be used to arrange for visits, or the need of a volunteer; however, use them to tell a parent that their child is doing well, or telling them something special their child did. This promotes positive communications.
14. These are suggested guidelines for establishing positive relationships with parents:
 - a. show a genuine interest in the child and let the parent know that the school welcomes them and wants them to take part in the program
 - b. urge parents to visit the school freely
 - c. compliment the parent on anything you can
 - d. let the mother/father do as much of the talking as possible
 - e. be pleasant and friendly
 - f. accept the mother/father as they are
 - g. be careful not to tell a parent how to run their home
 - h. be aware of the feelings and perceptions of the parent
 - i. avoid criticism of individual lifestyles
 - j. avoid discussion of controversial subjects
 - k. be a good listener because parents like to talk about their children
 - l. show the parents that you are interested in their child — point out at least one positive attribute of the child
 - m. use lay terminology
 - n. hold in confidence any information secured about a child or their home, passing information only to authorized persons
15. Keep records according to what is required by the state and your local school: attendance, individual file card for each child, register, checklist, parents field trip signature card, medical file of shots, etc.

PREKINDERGARTEN TEACHER

In any classroom, it is the teacher who determines the degree of success or failure of the program. He/she implements the standards, selects the activities and materials. The teacher establishes the atmosphere and environment which in turn affects attitudes and behaviors in children. The program will grow and develop as the teacher contributes her/his own special skill and interpretation. Therefore, the prekindergarten teacher should possess:

1. an appropriate State of Ohio teaching certificate
2. a thorough foundation in early childhood education
3. a knowledge of the needs of the prekindergarten child and his family
4. a knowledge of the community, its agencies and resources
5. a willingness to use a team approach in the classroom
6. a genuine love of children
7. patience to listen to and work with the young child
8. ability to make each child feel important
9. enthusiasm
10. fairness
11. ability to set a good example
12. flexibility
13. calmness
14. honesty
15. ability to work at the child's level
16. ability to encourage self confidence in the child — never shame, ridicule, embarrass or humiliate
17. good humor
18. the knowledge to use positive discipline approaches
19. ability to create a rich learning environment for the children
20. ability to encourage self-creativity
21. the desire and ability to work with parents

PREKINDERGARTEN TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

The teacher should be expected to assume the following responsibilities in addition to those assigned by his/her immediate supervisor:

1. assume all duties expected of the professional teaching staff of the school system
2. become an active and integral part of the school in which he/she is assigned
3. become totally familiar with state and local laws, regulations, policies and procedures
4. consult with and keep the supervisor informed
5. keep current and accurate records as required
6. assume the educational leadership for the classroom
7. coordinate the efforts of the prekindergarten paraprofessionals

Prekindergarten Teacher Responsibilities

8. schedule conference times with parents
9. establish an appropriate and attractive physical environment in the classroom
10. cooperate with other teachers in planning for continuity of the educational program
11. attend inservice meetings
12. join with other prekindergarten teachers in developing an effective program for the prekindergarten child
13. participate actively with other staff members in planning effective parent meetings
14. promote parent involvement in all aspects of the prekindergarten program
15. maintain positive relationships with members of the prekindergarten staff, the school staff and the community

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

The principal is responsible for the educational program in her/his school and is interested in promoting and maintaining the highest possible educational standards in their building.

The principal is a vital part of the prekindergarten team. The prekindergarten teacher should make every effort to involve the principal in the program and to keep him/her informed concerning all aspects of it. As the educational leader, as well as the administrator in charge, it is not only natural, but significantly important, to seek the principal's cooperation, advice and guidance. Principal assistance can be invaluable in the following areas:

1. visiting the classroom and becoming a friend to the children
2. establishing building policies and procedures concerning the prekindergarten program
3. using building and playground facilities
4. providing the equipment necessary for indoor and outdoor activities that are designed specifically for young children
5. using school personnel — nurse, custodian, school psychologist, aides, etc.
6. establishing policies concerning attendance records and other school records
7. relating the prekindergarten program to the total school program
8. arranging for parent meetings and child care during these meetings
9. ordering supplies
10. scheduling trips
11. arranging for substitutes
12. assisting in the orientation of new staff members
13. assisting in planning inservice meetings for the prekindergarten staff
14. providing leadership in curriculum development
15. disseminating ideas and information
16. assisting in the evaluation of the prekindergarten program

THE PREKINDERGARTEN PARAPROFESSIONAL

The paraprofessional in some cases may be a high school senior who has had their junior year devoted to studying child growth and development in a local high school and will be working in the program for one-half day, or she/he may be a paid aide or an adult volunteer. Their duties and responsibilities as a paraprofessional may include the following:

1. report promptly at the assigned time
2. notify the school in advance if they are ill or unable to report
3. serve under the direction of the prekindergarten teacher
4. keep all records and school matters confidential
5. be loyal to the school staff and prekindergarten teacher
6. be friendly to all guests who visit the room
7. take attendance and perform other clerical duties related to the classroom as requested by the teacher
8. obtain and prepare equipment for the children's arrival
9. help clean up after projects are completed
10. become familiar with the teacher's daily schedule
11. help prepare the snack
12. make telephone calls as requested by the teacher
13. keep anecdotal records on individual children under the direction of the teacher
14. assist with children who become ill or must be taken home because of illness or accident
15. supervise and participate in planned activity time
16. provide a catch-up opportunity for children who have been absent
17. direct educational games
18. assist with playground supervision
19. read stories to individual children or small groups of children
20. learn songs and fingerplays and teach them to the children
21. assist the teacher on educational trips
22. make nametags and charts or other crafts that are assigned
23. take children to the restrooms
24. assist children in learning how to remove and put on outdoor wraps
25. listen to and talk with children
26. encourage children to join in conversation and activities
27. assist in taking equipment out-of-doors and putting it away
28. assist in taking gym equipment out of storage and putting it away
29. help children follow the guidelines and limits set in the classroom
30. follow the discipline guidelines that the teacher uses with the children
31. assist the teacher with audio-visual equipment
32. help put the room in order before leaving for the day
33. be constantly aware of the safety of the child
34. notify the teacher of any accident
35. cooperate with all members of the staff
36. employ positive methods with the children
37. help arrange bulletin boards
38. be familiar with the goals and objectives for prekindergarten
39. be familiar with the school rules
40. know the exact route and plan for fire drills

DEVELOPING RAPPORT WITH CHILDREN

It is very important for those working with the young child to promote positive adult-child interaction. Therefore, the classroom personnel should:

1. use the voice as a teaching tool, speaking slowly, distinctly and directly to the child — it is helpful to move near the child and say their name when speaking to them
2. get down to eye level with the child when speaking or working with them
3. use instructions that are simple and brief
4. use words and a tone of voice that will help the child feel confident and reassured — not afraid, guilty or ashamed
5. always use a positive approach
6. smile and show children you truly care for them
7. be consistent, set the necessary classroom limits and guidelines and then stick to them
8. feel free to respond to the affections children may offer
9. be positive, telling the child what they can do rather than what they cannot do, as "walk slowly" rather than "don't run"
10. differentiate between "indoor" and "outdoor" voices
11. gain cooperation by implying that it is expected, using a calm, and relaxed, patient manner to give this implication
12. never threaten a child or use shame, ridicule or sarcasm — never scream at a child, and unless it is absolutely necessary, never chase after a child
13. keep promises made to a child — be sure that you can keep a promise before making it
14. if children must be disappointed, due to the cancellation of a trip, for example, make certain that the children understand the reason for the disappointment
15. offer choices only when there is a choice, "It is clean-up time," rather than "Would you like to clean up now?"
16. avoid showing partiality to any child
17. avoid comparing children
18. give a child plenty of time to complete a task
19. appreciate a child's efforts, asking "Would you like to tell me about that?" rather than "What is that?"
20. encourage children to initiate their own play activities

PROMOTING POSITIVE ADULT-CHILD INTERACTION

The following principles have been found successful as teaching techniques:

Positive Reinforcement - Behavior that is rewarding tends to be repeated. When a child does something positive, such as putting away the blocks or making a contribution to a discussion, they are rewarded so that they will continue this kind of behavior. The reward is a social reward. It may be a verbal "good job" or it may be a smile, a wink or a friendly pat on the back.

Promoting Positive Adult-Child Interaction

Extinction - Behavior that is unrewarding tends not to be repeated. Undesirable behavior can often be extinguished if it is ignored. For example, a child wants attention so they walk around the table and kick each chair. If an adult says, "We do not kick chairs," the child has accomplished their goal — they have received the attention they wanted. They now know that kicking chairs is a successful means of getting attention and will repeat that behavior when they want attention again. If chair kicking does not bring the desired attention, the child will try something else. Perhaps they will come to an adult and try conversation as a means of getting attention. This is a positive behavior and the adult should reinforce it. The next time the child wants attention they will not kick chairs but come to the adult for conversation. Generally, extinction can be used when an activity does not endanger the child, does not endanger another child or is not destructive to equipment or materials. The old saying, "Ignore it and it may go away," is often more truth than fiction.

Counter Conditioning - Counter conditioning is mainly used to overcome a child's fears. The child is placed in a situation they would normally fear while they are experiencing something pleasant. For example, they may be able to touch the pet rabbit while sitting on the teacher's lap or to overcome fear of thunder while holding an adult's hand.

Imitation - "Didn't (child's name) do a good job of cleaning up the housekeeping corner?" or, "What good manners you have to remember to say 'thank you,'" immediately produces a room full of helpful children cleaning up or saying "thank you."

Distraction - Distraction is helpful in many situations and particularly when two children decide to use the same toy at the same time. The adult may distract one of the children by asking, "Would you help me with these books?" or "Did you have a turn at the easel today?"

Satiation - Satiation means allowing a child to get their fill of a certain activity. If a child rips the pages out of books, he/she might be given a pile of papers and asked to rip them up. If a child has a need to run, take him/her outside, or if a child has the urge to hit, give him/her a punching bag.

ORIENTATION TO SCHOOL

The child's introduction to the prekindergarten classroom will influence their attendance and adjustment throughout the school year. It will also play a major role in determining their attitude toward school and education.

The parents' introduction to the prekindergarten program and the classroom personnel will influence their attitudes toward the program and the school and will determine the amount of cooperation and support they will be willing to give.

It is imperative that school personnel do everything possible to insure a successful start for the child and for their family.

Orientation to School

It will be helpful if the teacher meets with the parents and child. This will help the child become acquainted with the teacher and the room as well as informing parents of:

1. the purposes and procedures of the prekindergarten class
2. how they can become involved
3. the days and times the child will attend school

To provide a comfortable world for the children as they enter prekindergarten, it would be well if the teacher would:

1. have the children wear name tags until the staff knows their names
2. follow the regular classroom routine from the first day
3. understand that it is normal for some children to watch during the first few days of school
4. help each child find an activity that interests him/her
5. if a child demonstrates fear of being left in the classroom the parents should be encouraged to stay with the child until confidence is restored
6. the children should be acquainted with the location of materials, restrooms and drinking fountains
7. the children should be acquainted with the school building and where they are to keep their things
8. the limits that will be set for the child should be explained and used from the beginning of school

ARRIVAL

If the children are greeted daily upon arrival by a friendly adult it will improve their self-image and make them feel important and needed. It will help them develop positive attitudes toward the prekindergarten staff and toward the school situation. The wise teacher will make certain that each child receives a friendly welcome as the teacher knows that this effort will be repaid by a friendly, more cooperative, attitude from the child.

COAT REMOVAL

It is tempting and certainly more expedient, to unbutton the button with which a child has been having difficulty. However, it would not help this particular child develop the small muscle coordination needed to master the art of removing a button from a buttonhole. Staff members should only help with coat removal when help is really needed. When the child finally gets all buttons unfastened, the adult should compliment him/her, "That was a hard job, wasn't it, but I knew you could do it." Adults should always help when help is needed. Children should never be shamed if they cannot yet do this task. It is vital that young children be provided with low hooks and shelves for their wraps.

PLANNED ACTIVITY TIME

Since the children do not arrive in the classroom as a group, most teachers prefer to schedule a planned activity time or free play immediately after arrival. During the daily program, the teacher needs to have a schedule planned, but must be flexible — not timed by the clock. The plan should be guided by how the children appear to be occupied, how they feel and how deeply they are involved with their activities. The teacher should keep in mind the necessity for a balanced program, alternating active and quiet activities. A suggested schedule might be:

1. art activities
2. large muscle activities
3. small muscle - manipulative activities
4. work projects - visual etc., concept building
5. language development activities
6. nature or science activities
7. music or story time

PREREADING PROGRAM

The prereading program incorporates both the cognitive and affective areas of learning. It builds skills in the areas of memory, concentration and fine discrimination so that the child will have a greater opportunity for future success in reading as it promotes a positive self-image.

Children's names are chosen as the primary emphasis in this program because their name is important and meaningful to them and because it is something that will be reinforced in a variety of ways inside and outside the school environment.

The prereading program builds the children's self-image as they learn that they and their name are needed in school, that they are missed and missing something when they are unable to attend school.

As children experience success in identifying their own name and the names of others they begin to see themselves as successful, competent persons. If parents are invited to observe the accomplishments of their children they too begin to view the child as a successful, competent person by giving the child exposure to letters, sounds, and words in a meaningful, personal way.

REST ROOM PROCEDURES

If at all possible, rest room facilities and drinking fountains should be at a low level for the young child. The staff should explain to the children the use of toilets or urinals, provide any help needed with buttons, or zippers, establish the procedure of toileting, washing and drying hands, and become familiar with unusual words used by many children to indicate the needs for using the rest room. If a child does have an accident, the teacher should accept it as normal, comforting the child and providing dry clothing if possible.

SNACK TIME

The prekindergarten budget should provide for nutritious snacks and drinks. Along with the nutritional aspects of the snack program, many gains can be made through an effective use of snacks. This provides:

1. an opportunity to learn how to use a low drinking fountain
2. opportunities for children to relax and enjoy the company of their peers and adults
3. opportunity to experience teaching number concepts and one-to-one relationships
4. opportunities for children to visit stores
5. opportunities to compare foods in various forms
6. opportunities for assuming responsibility
7. a setting for further socialization skills

Suggestions of food comparison:

1. cheese and carrots = soft and hard
2. orange slices and orange juice
3. apples and applesauce

REST TIME

After a trip or very busy activity, you may ask the children to lie quietly for a few minutes. However, most of the time it is difficult for four-year-olds to keep all of their muscles still. Understanding this, the teacher may read books or play records while the children rest. It is not always necessary to include this period as a part of the daily schedule.

MUSIC

Four-year-olds enjoy music and rhythms. In addition to pleasure, music provides opportunities for developing language skills, a sense of rhythm, as well as, the utilization of large and small muscles.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Outdoor play facilities vary from school to school. In addition to available playground equipment, which has been designed specifically for the young child, planned games and activities, will need to be incorporated for large muscle development. Equipment could be:

tires	ladders
swings	slides
balls	merry-go-rounds
climbers	2 x 4 for balance board
tricycles	wagons
scooters	ropes
large boxes	huge tile to crawl through

INDOOR PLAY

Large muscle development is a vital part of the growing child and equipment must be provided for use inside during bad weather days. Equipment suggested:

skooters	balls
tunnels	parachute
boxes	balance boards
climbing — gyms, slide & ladder	
— and various other indoor equipment that is	
specifically designed for the gym area	

STORYTIME

Storytime might include:

stories from books	stories told on the flannel board
stories told from pictures	stories told by puppets
nursery rhymes	jingles
fingerplays	poems
pantomimes or dramatizations	

This provides opportunities for developing:

language skills	creativity
concepts	increased attention span
concentration	memorization
immediate and delayed recall	self expression
appreciation of literature	

SCIENCE/NATURE

Young children have a vital interest and curiosity concerning the things around them. They are natural scientists. Their enthusiasm and curiosity lead them to question, investigate, manipulate, classify and report. Therefore, opportunities can be offered through the following:

weather	water	birds nest
air	plants	sand & water table
food	animals & pets	workbench
measurement	simple machines	flashlights
seasons	magnifying glasses	rock collections
sound	terrarium	seeds
magnets	large thermometers	pulleys/wheels
balance & weight	leaves, shells, etc.	springs/locks
magnets, with metal & non-metal objects		mirrors

FIELD TRIPS

Library
Greenhouse
Log Cabin
Apple Orchard
Newspaper Office

Dentist
Grocery
Bakery
Farm
Cafeteria

Police Station
Fire Station
Post Office

DISCOVERY TABLE OR INTEREST CENTERS

Apples and applesauce
Corn - various corn products, husk corn and shell it
Large and small items
Texture table
What color is it?
Indian artifacts

ART ACTIVITIES

Art activities allow the children opportunities to express themselves creatively with a variety of media and they gain control of both large and small muscles and develop eye-hand coordination. Patterns, dittos and other specifically directed activities cannot be considered art. Children can be taught to draw a circle, but their creativity should be developed by placing the circles into snowmen, etc. For the young child the process is more important than the product. Their paintings may end up soggy, but they enjoyed the process of creating "their very own creation".

PREKINDERGARTEN CHECK LIST

Cognitive Objectives:

1. *Organize, classify, differentiate and integrate experiences*
 - a. follow simple verbal directions
 - b. classify by size
 - c. classify by shape
 - d. classify by color
 - e. classify by use or category
 - f. use one-to-one relationships
 - g. use number concepts through 5
 - h. participate in socio-dramatic play
 - i. identify the familiar whole from a part
 - j. copy a simple visual or auditory sequential pattern

Prekindergarten Check List

Cognitive Objectives: (contd.)

2. *Gain basic language skills*
 - a. use oral language
 - b. combine more than three words
 - c. respond verbally to questions
3. *Memory and sequential thinking skills*
 - a. memorize a simple song, poem or fingerplay
 - b. remember and retell a simple story in sequence
 - c. identify the missing object from a set of 4
 - d. identify the 8 basic colors by name
 - e. identify the 4 basic shapes
4. *Perception and curiosity*
 - a. talk about one's classroom activities to peers
 - b. talk about one's classroom activities to adults
 - c. use materials in new ways — experiment
 - d. participates in a variety of activities

Social-Emotional Objectives:

1. *Realistic and positive self-image*
 - a. offers to participate in a variety of activities
 - b. tastes unfamiliar foods
 - c. explores new materials
2. *Positive relationships with adults and peers*
 - a. accepts guidance from school personnel
 - b. relates to visitors in the classroom
 - c. talks to peers
 - d. relates to more than one peer
 - e. takes turns
 - f. asks to use equipment
3. *Success and pleasure in the classroom situation*
 - a. does not need constant supervision
 - b. follows classroom routine
 - c. begins to verbalize feelings and emotions
 - d. participates in group activities
 - e. accepts separation from home and family
 - f. is not upset by darkness or loud noises

Prekindergarten Check List

Physical Objectives:

1. *Body movement*
 - a. identifies and names major parts of the body (head, neck, chest,
 - b. states function or use of major body parts elbow, wrist, etc.)
2. *Body control and balance of large muscles*
 - a. running
 - b. jumping
 - c. hopping
 - d. marching
 - e. stretching
 - f. tricycling
 - g. swaying
 - h. climbing on indoor and outdoor equipment
 - i. walking up and down stairs using one foot per step
 - j. walking balance board
 - k. crawling
3. *Body control and balance of small muscles*
 - a. tiptoeing
 - b. clapping
 - c. throwing, catching and bouncing a ball
 - d. picking up small objects
 - e. stringing beads
 - f. controlling crayons, clay, chalk, paintbrush, scissors, paste
4. *Direction and spatial relationships — understands concepts of:*
 - a. big-little
 - b. tall-short
 - c. near-far
 - d. slow-fast
 - e. over-under
 - f. on-off
 - g. front-back

COGNITIVE GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND DEVELOPMENT

Four-year-olds differ in their readiness for cognitive activities. Teachers must be aware of each child's present level of cognitive development and assist in moving him/her into the next level. The staff should establish a curriculum which enables the child to: (1) organize, classify, differentiate and integrate experiences; (2) gain basic language skills; (3) increase skills in memory and sequential thinking; and (4) increase perception and curiosity.

1. *The prekindergarten curriculum should include experiences in organizing, classifying, differentiating and integrating:*

The four-year-old is developing many new concepts through the use of all five senses; therefore, teachers need to help the children organize and use the mass of knowledge gained through sensory perception.

Play is the young child's way of learning. Through play children develop their five senses, learn to cooperate, to share, to respect the rights and property of others, to appreciate and develop language skills needed for communication. Play also gives the child an opportunity to test and use new knowledge; therefore, teachers will be more successful in reaching cognitive goals with children if they plan "play activities" designed to help the child move toward the goals.

Most prekindergarteners listen to stories, poems, rhymes, fingerplays and look at pictures because these activities provide new information and opportunities for them to test their present knowledge; therefore, stories, poems, fingerplays, rhymes and pictures should be a major part of the prekindergarten program to encourage concept development.

2. *The staff should establish a curriculum which enables the child to gain basic language skills:*

Many four-year-olds use non-standard English; therefore, those who work with children should use good grammar. If the child speaks incorrectly, gently correct him/her, then set a good example for the child with your correct grammar.

Music is a natural medium for the young child; therefore, music aids in language development as children memorize and repeat language patterns. It offers opportunities for learning the rhythm of words and the rhythm of music.

Most young children are interested in stories, poems, rhymes and fingerplays; therefore, daily exposure to stories, poems, rhymes, etc., offers a wide variety of experiences through which language is developed.

Cognitive Goals, Objectives and Developments

3. *The staff should establish a curriculum which enables the child to increase skills in memory and sequential thinking:*

A great many four-year-olds have poorly developed skills in memory and sequential thinking. They observe, but they do not see differences in situations or in their environment. They lack skill in differentiating their perceptions and tend not to see what is new but to hold on to previous conceptions. Many prekindergarten children have fragments of understanding, but lack a frame of reference for interpreting this fragmentary knowledge; therefore, teachers can assist in the development of the memory and thinking skills by:

- a. helping the child talk about what he/she sees
- b. comparing what he/she sees to past experiences in terms of likenesses and differences
- c. comparison as to size and shape
- d. helping to see relationships according to category
- e. helping to relate the part to the whole

4. *The curriculum should include a program which enables the child to increase perception and curiosity about the world around him/her:*

The young child's curiosity, stimulated by television, extends far beyond the immediate environment; therefore, field trips, filmstrips, music, stories, poems, etc., allow children to see beyond their immediate environment to compare new experiences with previous experiences, to develop new concepts, to test the validity of present concepts and to extend their vocabularies.

Most four-year-olds are curious and ask many questions; therefore, teachers should recognize and encourage curiosity since it is basic to the educational process. It is often possible for teachers to help children discover answers for themselves. When this is not convenient or when an immediate answer is desirable, teachers should answer questions simply and directly.

Most four-year-olds manipulate and experiment with materials and equipment; therefore, in order to stimulate curiosity, the classroom should offer a wide variety of manipulative materials and many opportunities, within the limits of safety, for experimentation.

Young children are curious about pets and animals, therefore, classroom pets stimulate curiosity, and provide opportunities for concept development.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL GOALS

Teachers should create an environment which enables the child to: (1) gain a realistic and positive self-image; (2) develop positive relationships with adults and peers; and (3) find success and pleasure in the classroom situation.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL OBJECTIVES AND DEVELOPMENT

1. *Teachers should create an environment which enables the child to gain a realistic and positive self-image.*

Self-image develops as children begin to see themselves as others see them; therefore, the staff will play a vital part in helping the child develop a good positive self-image by paying attention to their ideas and suggestions, making them feel needed and important, praising them for their efforts and accomplishments, and providing many opportunities for them to develop their abilities.

The four-year-olds are beginning to experience a wide variety of feelings and emotions; therefore, teachers should help children understand and accept conflicting feelings as normal and guide them to constructive outlets.

Four-year-olds strive for a feeling of importance. In order to demonstrate their strength and power they may: compare physical size, boast, call names, tell tall tales, test limits, quarrel, or be physically aggressive; therefore, teachers should recognize these behaviors as normal, reinforce positive behaviors and provide many opportunities for the child to gain a feeling of power, strength and importance. Negative behavior may be diverted by physical activities such as the punching bag, clay or workbench.

The four-year-old is beginning to use words rather than physical aggression to express feelings and emotions; therefore, young children often have difficulty expressing their anger verbally, and it is quite natural for them to fight when their anger is aroused. Adults should help them learn to put their anger into words.

Hitting also provides an opportunity for physical contact. Young children commonly use hitting as a means for making a new friend. If you give a classmate a good sock, they are sure to notice you! Therefore, teachers should ask themselves why a child is hitting. When a child is using this method as a means of getting attention or making a friend, it is necessary to help them find more positive means for fulfilling these needs.

Social-Emotional Objectives and Development

2. *Teachers should create an environment which enables the child to develop positive relationships with adults and peers.*

The children should:

- a. accept guidance from school personnel
- b. relate to visitors in the classroom
- c. talk with their peers
- d. relate to more than one of their peers
- e. take turns
- f. ask to use equipment

Most four-year-olds seek reinforcement through conversation with adults; therefore, each member of the staff should take time to talk with and listen to the child.

Four-year-olds are basically ego-centered and sometimes find it difficult to share; therefore, have several items of the most popular materials available. Teachers can help the children learn to share and take turns by demonstrating a sincere respect for each child's wishes and rights.

At the age of four there is a period of resistance to authority. Four-year-olds may object when you TELL them something. They seek every opportunity to become independent; therefore, teachers must help children understand classroom limitations and provide many kinds of opportunities for them.

3. *Teachers should create an environment which enables the child to find success and pleasure in the classroom situation.*

The child should:

- a. not need constant supervision
- b. follow the routine
- c. begin to verbalize feelings and emotions
- d. participate in group activities
- e. be willing to accept separation from home and family
- f. learn to accept and possibly overcome fears

Young children need a sense of belonging and a feeling of security; therefore, the environment should be planned to meet the young child's needs. Activities should be planned to challenge, but be within the range of the child's ability to cope. It is very important that the classroom personnel be warm and friendly, accepting the child as he/she is.

Young children may have fears of darkness, loud noises, or of separation from family; therefore, the staff should encourage them to talk about and resolve these fears. Reassuring stories relating to these fears may help.

Social-Emotional Objectives and Development

3. *Teachers should create an environment (contd.)*

Some four-year-olds do not feel secure enough to participate in a full range of classroom activities and tend to return to the same activities day after day; therefore, teachers should change activities in the classroom from time to time. Participating with the child will promote a feeling of security and competence in the child.

Young children usually choose their companions on the basis of interest rather than sex or race; therefore, teachers should not make distinctions between boy or girl activities and should promote the formation of new partnerships for a wider range of experiences.

Each child follows his/her own timetable for social development. Near the age of four, most children begin to move from solitary play to parallel play and then to small group activity. It is not unusual to find all three levels of social development in one group; therefore, the teachers should be aware of the levels of development and plan a program that meets all children's needs.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

A most basic requirement before a child is ready to learn is sheer physical power. The control one has over one's body is the basic means for developing a good self-image. It holds the key to social-emotional behavior and cognitive development in that it affects the child's play and peer acceptance.

PHYSICAL GOALS

The staff should provide a curriculum that will enable the child to:
(1) develop an awareness of body image; (2) develop an understanding of direction and spatial relationships with regard to surroundings; (3) increase ability in balance and integrated body movement; and (4) increase physical power through control of body movement using large and small muscles in games and activities.

1. *Develop an awareness of body image*

Many four-year-olds have a limited awareness of their body image, and how the parts of the body function. Many children are only aware of their head, hands and feet.

The child needs guidance to discover how the body moves and many opportunities to sort out or differentiate one part from another. Fingerplays, flannel board activities, music, rhythms and moving specific parts on command provide such opportunities.

Physical Goals

2. *Develop an understanding of direction and relationships*

The eyes of four-year-olds are not fully developed; therefore, teachers should consider this characteristic when selecting classroom materials and activities.

Prekindergarten children often use poor judgment regarding physical activities due to a limited perception of space, weight, and cause and effect relationships; therefore, teachers need to set limits and guide children in safety during physical activity periods.

Most four-year-olds are not aware of their surroundings with regard to perception of space or direction; therefore, the teacher should plan activities to help the child gain an understanding of spatial relationships. As they respond to verbal directions, rhythmic activities, games, they gain knowledge and understanding of concepts.

3. *Increase ability in balance and body movement*

Most four-year-olds experience success in balancing both sides of their body simultaneously. They are beginning to develop skills needed for using both sides of the body individually and alternately; therefore, the teacher should be aware of each child's abilities and guide them to a higher level of development. When the child can use the body in an integrated manner, the mind will be free to concentrate on more abstract or cognitive matters. The walking board, balance beam, teeter-totter board, and use of steps provide these opportunities.

4. *Increase skills in use of large and small muscles*

a. large muscle activities:

running	marching	hopping
stretching	clapping	jumping
climbing on equipment	tricycling	swaying

b. small muscle activities:

tiptoeing	stringing beads
clapping	throwing, catching & bouncing
picking up small objects	the ball
controlling crayons, chalk, paint brush, clay, scissors	

Physical Goals

4. *Increase skills (contd.)*

Large muscle development in four-year-olds is more advanced than small muscles; therefore, vigorous physical activities for both the indoors and outdoors should be a vital part of the program. A daily physical routine strengthens coordination and development of large muscles.

The young child is only beginning to gain control of small muscles; therefore, the teacher should provide a wide variety of manipulative activities, games and materials that will help control the use of small muscles.

THE PHYSICAL SETTING

The physical setting of the prekindergarten classroom is usually divided into areas or corners. The areas and the types of materials to be found in a well-supplied room would include:

Woodworking Corner

Workbench
Hammers, short handle
Screwdrivers, short handle (Phillips and regular will challenge the child to match)
Nails, screws
Wood
Sandpaper
Glue

Housekeeping Corner

Several dolls - doll clothes should be easy to put on the doll with easy fasteners
Cupboards
Stove
Sink
Refrigerator
Doll carriage
Doll bed
Blankets
Mirror (placed at various places around the room and at the child's level)
Ironing board and iron
Unbreakable dishes, pots, pans, cutlery
Cleaning set with broom, dustpan, mop
Small table and chairs
Table cloth
High chair for dolls
Rocking chair

The Physical Setting

Housekeeping Corner (contd.)

Play clock
Salt timers
Telephones
Dress up clothes, hats, accessories for men and women
Chest of drawers
Empty food boxes
Small suitcases
Cash register and toy money
Clothes rack

Block Corner

Large hollow blocks
Smaller blocks
Boards
Large ride-on trucks
Wooden bar or house
Wooden or rubber animals
Trains, trucks, cars, tractors, boats, airplanes (various sizes)
Wooden people

Book Corner

Bookcase that children can reach
Books
Rug
Pictures for children to handle
Good lighting
Rocking chair

Music Corner

Record player
Unbreakable records
Rhythm instruments
Piano
Autoharp
Music books with pictures so the children can look and choose the songs

Large Muscle Activities

Slide	Balancing boards
Jungle gym	Balls
Punching bag	Skooter Boards
See-saw	Climbing Ladder
Wagons	(It is necessary to provide large muscle
Tricycles	equipment for both outdoors and indoors.)
Fun Tunnel	

The Physical Setting

Manipulative Materials

Felt boards and felt pieces
Pegboards
Puzzles
Beads
Hammer-nail sets
ABC blocks
Parquetry set (very basic)
Dressing frames for zipping,
buttoning, etc.
Postal box
Counting frame
Clay

Stacking discs
Barrels or cans of different sizes
Clock with movable hands
Pounding bench
Insets
Cylinders
Dominoes
Lotto games
Card games
Sequence boards
Color cones

Science Corner

Low tables for displays
Animals
Animal cages and/or bowls
Magnifying glass and other
science equipment

Magnet box
Boxes with seasonal items
Shells, nests, cocoons, leaves,
seeds, roots, stones, etc.
Plants

Puppet Corner

Puppets of all kinds
Stage or boxes

Art Corner

Easles
Newsprint
Tempera paint
1/2 inch brushes
Smocks
Manila drawing paper
Felt tip markers - water color
Pencils
Crayons
Finger paints
Finger paint paper
Drying racks

Construction paper of various colors
Paste
Scissors
Clay
Magazines
Scrap materials
Chalk
Washable flooring
Soap and paper towels
Masking tape

The teacher can make the most of what is available by remembering three keys to a successful room:

Purpose
Order
Flexibility

BASIC TEACHER NEEDS

Filmstrip Projector
Filmstrips
Motion Picture Projector
16mm Films
Audio Tape Recorder
Overhead Projector
TV Receiver

Staples
Tape — masking and scotch
Stapler
Thumb tacks
Scissors
Paper clips
Whistle
Colored felt tip markers
Smock

Supplies to serve snack — plastic pitcher, cups, plates, napkins, spoons, forks
Supplies for cooking — electric skillet, glass mixing bowls, wooden spoon, can
opener, hot plate, glass pyrex pan, paper towels, hot pads,
wood chopping board, bottle opener and glass measuring cups

Dittos
Envelopes — large and small
Stationery
Pens and pencils
Bookends
Ruler and yardstick
Supply cupboards
Storage cupboards
Desk and chair
Wastebasket

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